

# Woodbury City Update

June 2020 • Volume 21, No. 5



*Woodbury Public Safety Director/Police Chief Lee Vague (left) discusses policing, race and equity with Woodbury resident Timothy Brewington II, a pastor at Fellowship Church and member of Public Safety's Multicultural Advisory Committee. The two men recorded the interview – now available at [woodburymn.gov/PolicingRaceEquity](http://woodburymn.gov/PolicingRaceEquity) – June 3 at the South Washington County Telecommunications Commission (SWCTC) studio in Cottage Grove. Photo courtesy of SWCTC.*

## Policing, race and equity

The tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis has reverberated in the community, throughout the City of Woodbury organization and, most importantly, among community members of color.

“I, along with the members of the Woodbury City Council and staff, are shocked and appalled by what happened to Mr. Floyd,” said Mayor Anne Burt. “Our hope is for justice for the Floyd family, and to eventually begin the healing process here in the Twin Cities and throughout the country.”

The City of Woodbury and the Woodbury Public Safety Department remain committed to uphold the constitutional rights of every individual and value life beyond any other public purpose.

“Fostering an inclusive and welcoming community that values all residents and their diversity is paramount to the city’s continued success,” Burt noted. “In addition, we will continue working to ensure all of our community members feel welcome, safe and connected in the community.”

Earlier this month, Woodbury resident Timothy Brewington II, a pastor at Fellowship Church and member of Public Safety’s Multicultural Advisory Committee, sat down with Woodbury Public Safety Director Lee Vague to talk about his reaction to the death of George Floyd and how Public Safety can be held accountable to protect and serve all residents. To watch a video of the conversation, visit [woodburymn.gov/PolicingRaceEquity](http://woodburymn.gov/PolicingRaceEquity).

## Temporary water treatment plant nears completion State continues to study long-term solutions for East Metro

Construction activities continue on the temporary water treatment facility that will treat four of the city’s seven water wells that currently exceed water quality standards and guidelines for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

All seven of these wells have been taken out of service, and water delivered to customers continues to meet all state and federal water quality standards.

However, it is critical the city implement temporary treatment options as soon as possible to allow the city to meet water demand on peak use days.

“Our primary goal is to be producing water at the temporary treatment facility that meets all state and federal standards for PFAS as soon as possible,” said Jim Westerman, the city’s utility manager. “All four of the wells designated for treatment at the plant

have been connected to the site. We began the process of bringing the treatment plant online in late May and this work will continue into the summer. Full site construction will continue through the summer even after the facility is fully operational.”

The 3M Company made PFAS at its Cottage Grove facility from the late 1940s until 2002. PFAS wastes were disposed of at multiple sites in Washington County. The source of the PFAS in Woodbury’s groundwater has been identified as these disposal sites.

The City of Woodbury is not paying for the estimated \$11 million capital cost of constructing the temporary treatment plant. The 2007 consent decree between the State of Minnesota and 3M is funding the temporary water treatment plant. The State of Minnesota manages how the funds are used.

### Long-term solutions

The temporary water treatment facility is expected to be in operation until a long-term water treatment solution can be implemented, expected to be around 2025-2027. The State of Minnesota continues to study long-term treatment options for several communities in the east metro area and is expected to share its recommendations with the cities in fall 2020. Funds for long-term water treatment solutions in the east metro are expected to be available through the \$720 million settlement the state received from 3M in 2018.

If you have questions about the city’s water system and the impact of PFAS, visit [woodburymn.gov/pfas](http://woodburymn.gov/pfas) or contact Public Works at 651-714-3720 or [publicworks@woodburymn.gov](mailto:publicworks@woodburymn.gov).



Temporary water treatment plant

# Council Perspective

By Mayor Anne Burt

## City buildings reopen; public encouraged to conduct city business remotely

I want to express my gratitude to all of you for staying home as much as possible at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. I appreciate your cooperation and understanding, and know how challenging this was for so many of our families, businesses and organizations. You made a difference and we are now beginning to reopen our community.

City Hall and the Public Safety and Public Works buildings reopened to the public in early June.

We hope you will continue to conduct business with the city remotely as much as possible. City staff is available via phone or email to help with most service requests. Some services are also available online at [woodburymn.gov](http://woodburymn.gov). If you must come in for service, please call the department from which you need service in advance and make an appointment.

■ City Hall - 651-714-3500

■ Public Safety - 651-714-3600

■ Public Works - 651-714-3720

Below are some specific status updates about key amenities, summer events and operational changes. However, the state's policy and guidance is a moving target, especially given the developing scientific and medical understanding of COVID-19, so the information below is subject to change.

### Reopening city buildings

The front lobbies at Public Safety and Public Works are safely enclosed and restrict public access; however, the City Hall lobby and hallways are not similarly protected. Operational changes have been made to serve customers within the lobby area.

Eagle Valley Golf Course is open for the season. As for other public buildings, Central Park and Lookout Ridge indoor playground in the lower level of Central Park and the HealthEast Sports Center (HSC) will remain closed to walk-in guests until further notice. Central Park and HSC will host small group rentals beginning in June. All facility use will follow guidelines

for group size and social distancing set forth by the state.

### Public meetings

In-person City Council meetings resumed in the Council Chambers at Woodbury City Hall May 27. In order to continue practicing appropriate social distancing, some Council members, as well as members of staff, continued to participate virtually and may do so until further notice. In addition, the public continues to have the option of participating in the meeting online.

For those who wish to attend a meeting in-person, seating in the Council Chambers will be arranged to accommodate physical distancing (chairs placed 6 feet apart). Face masks are advised, but note that if you are commenting during the meeting and are wearing a face mask, you will be asked to remove your mask while speaking.

Members of the public may join the virtual meeting using a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device. Questions and comments may be submitted via the online Q&A feature within the virtual meeting. Please refer to the Participating in a Virtual Meeting Guide on the city's website for more information.

All public meetings will offer a virtual option for public participation until further notice. Virtual options available to the public will be communicated when the meetings are posted.

### Carver Lake Beach

Opening of the beach for the summer has been postponed. It is unknown at this time when/if the beach will open this summer.

### Splash pad

Opening the splash pad at HealthEast Sports Center has been postponed to encourage social distancing and reduce water use until the city's temporary water treatment facility is fully operational this summer. It is unknown at this time when/if the splash pad will open this summer.

### Parks and playgrounds

Playgrounds remain open, however, the city does not have the resources to sanitize the playgrounds and other park amenities. Please use caution when using these amenities and follow proper hygiene guidelines recommended by the Minnesota Department of Health.

Park restrooms reopened the week of June 1, except for at Carver Lake Beach and the Ojibway Park Building. The facilities will be cleaned daily.

### Buildings and fields

Park buildings/shelters and athletic fields reopened to renters June 1 as guidelines allow.

### Fourth of July

The annual Fourth of July celebration at HSC is canceled for 2020. There will be no fireworks display.

### Night to Unite

Night to Unite will be delayed from the first Tuesday of August to the first Tuesday of October (Oct. 6). We are encouraging people to hold Night to Unite block parties, ice cream socials or get-togethers more than ever this year to strengthen neighborhood spirit. The Woodbury Public Safety Department would love to be a part of your celebration. Request a visit at [woodburymn.gov/nighttounite](http://woodburymn.gov/nighttounite).

### Woodbury Days

Woodbury Days, the annual community festival held each August, is canceled for 2020.

### Summer recreation programs

A limited number of programs will begin at the end of June with hopes of adding a few more modified programs in July and August. Programming will be limited based on requirements for limited size groups, social distancing and disinfecting.

### Public Safety

The Public Safety Department launched a helpline (651-414-3499)

that is available from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, to help connect people to needed resources.

In addition, Public Safety has received many requests for birthday "parade" drive-bys. Unfortunately, due to an increasing volume of calls for service, we are no longer able to honor these requests.

### Online services

Utility customers who want pay their bills or residents who want to register for recreation programs are strongly encouraged to use the online services available on the city's website.

### Support local businesses

It's important that you support our local businesses as they begin to reopen their doors, but take appropriate precautions. Our Economic Development Division has created a list of resources on the city's website for business owners during this challenging time. Visit [woodburymn.gov/COVID-19](http://woodburymn.gov/COVID-19) for details.

### Financial impact

It is still too early to determine the full financial impact COVID-19 is having on the city budget, but we are analyzing it closely. We are developing a plan about how to best balance providing the level of services residents are used to with the financial realities of today. Everything is on the table and the City Council, working with members of the community and staff, will build a fiscal plan and find solutions.

This is a critical time for residents and businesses to stay informed. The city is sharing information regularly about the impact of COVID-19 on city services and operations through a variety of communications vehicles, including the city's website ([woodburymn.gov/COVID-19](http://woodburymn.gov/COVID-19)), newsletter, InTouch email notification, Cable TV programming, YouTube channel, CodeRED emergency telephone calling and texting system, NextDoor and other social media outlets.

All the best in health to you and your families.



## Delaying irrigation system startups may help avoid irrigation ban

Property owners are encouraged to wait until the temporary water treatment facility is fully operational this summer before turning on their irrigation systems. This delay may help avoid an irrigation ban.

The additional watering restrictions may be needed due to seven of the city's wells being taken out of service because of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The irrigation ban will only be needed until the temporary water treatment facility – currently under construction near the intersection of Valley Creek Road and Tower Drive – is operational later this summer (see article on page 1).

If water demand approaches the amount the city can supply with the seven wells out of service, a total lawn irrigation ban will be necessary to avoid a loss of water pressure in the system. Once the water system loses pressure, contaminants can

enter the water distribution system. With a pressure loss, the Minnesota Department of Health will issue a “boil water order,” which means residents will be required to boil the water to ensure it is safe prior to consuming it.

While an irrigation ban is not yet in effect (as of June 5), it is important to remember the city's lawn watering policy allows lawn sprinkling on an odd/even schedule before noon and after 5 p.m.

However, just because the city allows watering on an odd-even schedule, doesn't mean residents and businesses need to water that often. To keep your lawn green, it only needs 1 inch of water per week, including rainfall.

When the treatment facility opens and it is time to sprinkle, homeowners should know how to operate their irrigation systems, including how to adjust various sprinkler settings. Here are a few tips:

1. Turn the system's automatic function off. Adjust the controls manually when it needs water. To learn more about WaterSense certified controllers, see “Water efficiency programs” below.
2. If you notice an area of your yard needs more water, change the setting on that zone or adjust the sprinkler heads watering that specific area.
3. Replace heads with high efficiency, pressure reducing heads. Make adjustments so water is delivered as close to the turf as possible. This minimizes water lost to evaporation.
4. Observe your system in action. Adjust nozzles and irrigation duration as needed to ensure efficient use of water. Make sure water is not sprinkling hard surfaces such as sidewalks, roadways and driveways. If water is running off your grass, you're using too much.



5. When talking to your lawncare company, ask them what you can do to reduce water use and decrease the amount of time you spend mowing, without changing the look of your yard.

The lawn watering policy is in effect year-round and applies to private well owners, too. First-time offenders are not exempt.

Complying with the watering regulations not only will conserve water but also may prevent you from receiving a \$50 citation (first offense).

Special watering permits for newly-placed sod and seed are available under the existing odd/even and time of day restrictions at [woodburymn.gov/waterpermits](http://woodburymn.gov/waterpermits). Special water permits will not be available if increased water restrictions are implemented.

### Water efficiency programs

WaterSense certified smart irrigation controllers are now available to homeowners at a discounted rate of \$35. These controllers connect your irrigation system to local weather forecasts through your WiFi to adjust the system before and after a rain event, and also corrects for temperatures and wind speeds. Since the city started this program in 2016, these controllers reduced water use by an average of 30,000 gallons of water per household per year (resulting in smaller water bills, too).

All irrigation controllers installed in the city in 2018 and after are required to be WaterSense certified.

Visit [woodburymn.gov/waterwise](http://woodburymn.gov/waterwise) to learn more.

## 2019 Drinking Water Report now available online

Woodbury's drinking water is monitored regularly for contaminants, in accordance with federal and state laws.

To advance consumers' understanding of drinking water and heighten awareness of the need to protect water resources, the monitoring results are published each spring in the city's annual Drinking Water Report.

The 2019 water quality report, which includes information on the monitoring done on Woodbury drinking water between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2019, is now available on the city's website at [woodburymn.gov/waterqualityreport](http://woodburymn.gov/waterqualityreport).

**We are proud to report that no contaminants monitored under the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements were detected at levels that violated state and federal drinking water standards.**

Please review the report and, if you have questions, contact Jim Westerman, utilities manager, at 651-714-3720.

If you don't have internet access, you can obtain a paper copy by calling Public Works at 651-714-3720.



### Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

In addition to the contaminants that are tracked and measured under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the city also is closely monitoring levels of PFAS in the water system.

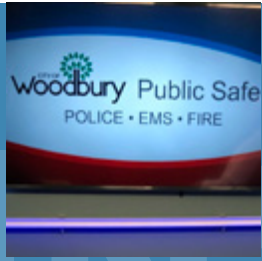
“Unlike other chemicals, PFAS monitoring is not required as part of the Safe Drinking Water Act,” Westerman explained. “However, the Minnesota Department of Health has been monitoring City of Woodbury municipal wells for PFAS since the early 2000s, and we've continued to update the

public about changes in the PFAS testing results when needed and as part of this annual drinking water report.”

Details about the history of PFAS in Woodbury wells and testing results through 2019 also are available at [woodburymn.gov](http://woodburymn.gov).

Learn more about how Woodbury is working with the state to address PFAS in the east metro water supply on page 1.

Residents who have questions about their private water supply should contact the MDH.



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Postal Patron  
Woodbury, MN

## Fourth of July fireworks canceled

Woodbury's annual Fourth of July Hometown Celebration at HealthEast Sports Center (HSC) is canceled this year to encourage appropriate physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be no fireworks display.

The Woodbury Parks and Recreation Department is looking forward to the event returning in 2021 – with live music, food trucks and, of course, the fireworks.

Learn more about how COVID-19 has impacted other city events and operations in Mayor Anne Burt's column on page 2 of this newsletter.

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## Election judges needed

Election Day polling locations will be open for the 2020 primary (Aug. 11) and general (Nov. 3) elections. Election judges are needed to staff these polling locations.

Election judges and election judge trainees are the officials who staff polling locations and ensure the rights of voters are protected on Election Day.

Election judges must be:

- A U.S. citizen and eligible to vote in Minnesota
- At least 18 years old
- Able to read, write and speak English
- Able to complete a two-hour training session

Election judge trainees must be at least 16 years old and in good standing at school.

Applications are available on the Washington County website at

[www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us) (search "Election judge application"). For additional information, contact Washington County Elections at [electionjudges@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:electionjudges@co.washington.mn.us) or 651-430-6790.

### Absentee voting

Absentee voting for the primary election will begin June 26 and continues through Monday, Aug. 10.

"The City of Woodbury and Washington County are working to ensure COVID-19 best practices are followed this election season to protect public health," said City Clerk Kim Blaaser. "One way Woodbury voters can protect themselves is to vote early by absentee ballot – in person or by mail."

An absentee ballot application can be completed online at the Minnesota Secretary of State website ([mnvotes.org](http://mnvotes.org)). Once the absentee ballot appli-

cation is completed, a ballot will be mailed to the eligible voter to complete and return via mail. Call 651-430-6175 or visit the Washington County website ([www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us)) for more information.

Woodbury voters who wish to vote absentee in-person may do so at the Washington County Government Center, 14949 62nd Street North, in Stillwater. In-person absentee voting may also be done at in the lower level of Central Park, 8595 Central Park Place, in Woodbury between Aug. 4 and Aug. 10. Absentee voting hours at the Central Park will be:

- Tuesday, Aug. 4, through Friday, Aug. 7, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Aug. 8, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Monday, Aug. 10, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Fireworks reminders

When celebrating the Fourth of July this summer, remember that it is illegal in Minnesota to sell, possess and use any fireworks that fly or explode. Some examples of illegal fireworks include firecrackers, bottle rockets and Roman candles.

However, certain non-explosive and non-aerial consumer fireworks are permitted. Examples include sparklers; cones and tubes that emit sparks; and novelty items like snakes and party poppers.

For more information, visit the Minnesota Department of Public Safety website at [dps.mn.gov](http://dps.mn.gov).